

Department of State

§ 19.5-3

principal elects to make payments to the Fund for this service;

(b) The entire period of Government service for which a principal received a refund of retirement contributions which he/she has not repaid unless the former spouse received under § 19.13 a portion of the (lump-sum) refund or unless a spousal agreement or court order provided that no portion of the refund be paid to the former spouse; and

(c) All creditable service including service in excess of 35 years.

The period covered by the credit for unused sick leave is not creditable for this purpose.

§ 19.5 Required notifications to Department respecting spouses and former spouses.

§ 19.5-1 Notification from participant or annuitant.

If a participant or former participant becomes divorced on or after February 15, 1981, he/she shall notify the Department (PER/ER/RET) of the divorce on or prior to its effective date. The notice shall include the effective date of the divorce, the full name, mailing address, and date of birth of the former spouse and the date of the member's marriage to that person, and enclose a certified copy of the divorce decree. If there is a court order or spousal agreement concerning payment or non-payment of Foreign Service benefits to the former spouse, the original or a certified copy of the order or agreement shall also be forwarded to PER/ER/RET. In the absence of a court order or spousal agreement providing otherwise, the Department will pay a pro rata share of the member's benefits to the former spouse. (A former spouse of a former participant who separated from the Service on or before February 15, 1981 is not eligible for a pension under § 19.9, i.e., not eligible for a pro rata share of the principal's annuity.) Upon receipt of notice of a divorce, a court order, or spousal agreement, the Department will proceed as indicated in § 19.6 or § 19.7. Delinquent notice to the Department of the divorce of an annuitant will result in retroactive payments to any qualified former spouse to the extent that the retroactive payments can be deducted from future an-

nuit payments to the principal as stated in § 19.6-4.

§ 19.5-2 Notification to Department from former spouses.

A former spouse is obligated to notify the Department of the following on a timely basis:

(a) A divorce from a participant or former participant when the former spouse is notified by the court of the divorce before the participant is notified;

(b) Any change in address; and

(c) Any remarriage.

Notices shall be sent to the Department of State, Attention PER/ER/RET, Washington, DC 20520.

§ 19.5-3 Residence of spouse during service at unhealthful post.

(a) The calculation of the pro rata share of benefits for a former spouse, and the determination of whether a person qualifies as a "former spouse" depends on the length of the marriage. The latter, under the definition in the Act and when the principal has received extra service credit for an assignment to an unhealthful post, depends upon whether a spouse has resided with the principal at the unhealthful post. In order to determine residency for this purpose, whenever a married participant is assigned to an unhealthful post for which he/she *does not* receive post differential and *does* receive or request extra service credit, the participant shall report on Form OF-140, Election to Receive Extra Service Credit Towards Retirement, whether his/her spouse is or is not residing at the post. Although a chief of mission is not required to submit Form OF-140 in order to receive extra credit for service at an unhealthful post, he/she must nevertheless submit this form if the chief of mission has a spouse that does not accompany him/her at post for the entire assignment. Both the participant and spouse shall sign the completed form. If there is a change in residence of the spouse during the assignment, a new joint Form OF-140 shall be filed to report the change.

(b) Whenever a participant retires or becomes divorced, or whenever a former participant becomes divorced

who has extra service credit for assignment at unhealthful posts completed prior to the issuance of this regulation who was married during at least a portion of the assignment, the participant or former participant shall submit a statement to PER/ER/RET reporting on whether his/her spouse resided at the unhealthful post and the dates of such residence. The statement shall be signed by the principal and his/her spouse or former spouse whenever possible.

(c) In the event of a disagreement between a principal and his/her spouse or former spouse concerning residency at an unhealthful post, or the submission of a report or statement by a principal showing a period of nonresidence at a post by a spouse which is not signed by the spouse, the determination of residence will be made by PER/ER/RET and based on records in the Department of payments for travel and allowances plus any other evidence that can be adduced. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, the assumption will be made that the spouse resided at the post.

§ 19.6 Court orders and divorce decrees.

§ 19.6–1 Orders by a court.

(a) A court may—

(1) Fix the amount of any pension to a former spouse under § 19.9, or order that none be paid;

(2) Fix the amount of any regular survivor annuity to a former spouse under paragraphs (a) and (b) of § 19.11, or order that none be paid;

(3) Order provision of an additional survivor annuity for a spouse or former spouse under § 19.10–5;

(4) Fix the amount of any benefit under § 19.10–6 based on recall service payable to a former spouse to whom the annuitant was married during any portion of the recall service, or order that none be paid;

(5) Fix the amount of any lump-sum payable to a former spouse under § 19.13 or order that none be paid;

(6) Order, to the extent consistent with any obligation stated in § 19.8 between a participant and a former spouse, and pursuant to any court decree of divorce, legal separation or an-

nulment or any court ordered or approved property settlement agreement incident to any court decree of divorce, legal separation, or annulment, that any payment from the Fund which would otherwise be made to a former participant based on his/her service shall be paid (in whole or in part) by the Secretary of State to a previous spouse or child of such participant. No apportionment under this paragraph may be made of a payment authorized to be paid to a survivor of a participant or annuitant.

(b) An order by a court that does not meet the definition of “court” in § 19.2(f) is not valid for purposes of this section even though a divorce decree issued by such court may be a basis for pro rata share payments to a former spouse as described in these regulations.

§ 19.6–2 Qualifying court order.

(a) To be valid for purposes of this section, a court order must be found to be “qualified” by PER/ER/RET acting for the Secretary of State. A qualifying court order must—

(1) Be consistent with the terms of the Act and applicable regulations;

(2) Not direct payment of an amount in excess of the maximum amount authorized to be paid by the relevant regulation;

(3) Direct that payments be made to an eligible beneficiary from a principal’s Foreign Service retirement benefit or survivor benefit. If a court directs or implies that a principal, rather than the Secretary of State or the Government, make the payments, the order will not be considered qualified unless the principal does not object during the 30-day notice period provided under § 19.6–6;

(4) Define the amount to be paid to a beneficiary in way so that it can be readily calculated from information in the normal files of the Department;

(5) Not make payment contingent upon events other than those on which other payments from the Fund are based such as age, marital status and school attendance; and

(6) Not be in conflict with any previously issued court order which remains valid.